

Found a flat - now what?

Congratulations on your successful flat search!

If you receive money from a **benefit agency (Job Centre, Department of Asylum, Social Welfare Office)**, you must now observe the following. **You may not sign the tenancy agreement yet, but must first have it checked and approved.**

First of all, you have to get an estimate from your future landlord. A cost estimate should include the following information:

- The amount of the cold rent (basic costs)
- The amount of any additional costs (heating, water, electricity)
- The amount of the operating costs (stairwell cleaning, caretaker costs, rubbish, etc.)
- The amount of the deposit (maximum three cold rents)
- Possible graduated rent (automatic increase of the rent)

With the **cost estimate**, you must go to your **benefit provider in Mannheim (Job Centre, Asylum Department, Social Welfare Office)**. The latter decides whether the flat is appropriate. You may need to provide further documentation to the benefit provider or landlord. You should do this as soon as possible. If everything is in order, the service provider authorises the signing of the tenancy agreement.

If you do **not** have a **residence requirement** in your document for refugees or electronic residence title, you may sign the tenancy agreement. If you have a [residence requirement](#), then you must submit an application to the Aliens' Registration Office.

Important: Before you sign a rental contract, look carefully! This Consumer Protection [checklist](#) can help you with this.

Please check whether there is a **clause** in the tenancy agreement **regarding renovation**. This could state that the flat is to be renovated by the tenant upon moving in and/or that one to two cold rents must be paid for this. **Important for benefit recipients:** The costs of the flat for the rent-free period are not covered. Renovation costs are also not covered.

The **deposit** is a security payment for the landlord. The amount for the deposit is a **maximum of 3 cold rents**. When you move out of the property, you get the money back.

Important: You must **not leave any damage behind** when you move out of the flat. The landlord can **offset** any damage to the flat against the **deposit**.

Relocation, initial equipment/Replacement, reregistration and change of address

Take care **before moving** to find a **way to transport your belongings**.

Familiarise yourself with the **house rules** in your new home. The house rules often also include conditions regarding moving in or moving furniture. You can find more details under: [What are house rules?](#)

Important: You are **not** allowed to **take the furniture from an asylum centre**. That is why you need new furniture.

You can apply to the Job Centre for **initial equipment**. You will then receive a flat-rate amount from the Job Centre. This amount can vary according to the number of people and the size of the property. The following applies when **applying for initial equipment at the Job Centre: The sooner, the better**. If you have already purchased items for your home, these will **not** be **reimbursed retroactively**.

Caution: It can take a few weeks before the money is paid out by the Job Centre!

If your previous tenant leaves various things in the flat, you can buy them from him/her (**transfer fee**).

Please remember to inform the following institutions of your **change of address**:

- Job Centre
- Einwohnermeldeamt (Registration Office) in your new community
- Ausländerbehörde (Immigration Office) in your new community
- Bank
- Health insurance
- Retirement pension institution
- School and kindergarten (if you have children)
- Familienkasse (The Family Benefits Office)

Important: Please make sure your name is on the letterbox.

As soon as you have moved into your new home, you must **register with your new municipal administration** within two weeks. For this, you need a **“Vermieterbescheinigung” (landlord's certificate)** from your landlord. If you miss the two-week deadline, a penalty may be imposed.

We recommend setting up a [forwarding address](#) at the post office, so that your mail will be forwarded to your new address.